



Ways to Use *Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook*

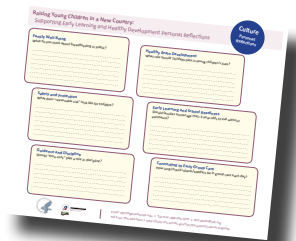
Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook was created for Early Head Start/Head Start programs, Refugee Resettlement, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS), Early Care and Education Providers and other community agencies serving refugees and immigrants to ensure that families have the basic information they need for raising children birth through age five in this country. The *Handbook* emphasizes the following six themes: family well-being, safety and protection, guidance and discipline, healthy brain development, early learning and school readiness, and connecting to early care and education.

The *Handbook* is intended to begin focused conversations about diverse parenting practices in order to promote cross-cultural understanding; it should not serve as a “how to” booklet. The content and themes can be interwoven into existing program resources and services.

Process for Engaging Families:

1 Staff Self-Reflection

- Before exploring themes, staff can participate in self-reflective exercises to become more aware of their own parenting beliefs and practices that are rooted in their culture. This is an opportunity for staff to explore diverse points of view and to consider differences before interacting with families. It is important that this process be inclusive and respectful, so the staff feel comfortable and safe discussing their experiences. This exercise also fosters cross-cultural understanding and reflects ways that staff may later engage and respond to families with diverse parenting practices.
- The *Raising Young Children in a New Country: Early Learning and Healthy Development Personal Reflections* handout (see attached) is a sample of what may be used to facilitate conversation about different developmental expectations and responses to individual cultural parenting approaches (e.g., sleeping arrangements; or toileting practices). Staff members are encouraged to create their own Personal Reflections handout questions based on what is relevant in their program.



2 Team Planning

- Staff and families can discuss a theme that is most relevant to the lives of families in the program.
- Workshops or meetings can be led in partnership with staff, an experienced newcomer parent, a U.S.-born parent, and/or community partners. This model promotes equality, shared learning, and relationship-based practice.
- The *Handbook's* content and activities can be infused into existing services and Head Start frameworks. For example, it can be a tool in addressing the Office of Head Start National Center on Parent, Family, Community Engagement's (PFCE) Relationship-Based Competence #4, “Parent-Child Relationships and Families As Lifelong Educators.”



Ways to Use *Raising Young Children in a New Country:* *Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook* (cont'd)

- Activities can be ongoing to provide refugee and immigrant parents with opportunities to ask questions, try out new behaviors, and find positive support.

3 Approaches and Resources:

- During interactions with families, it is important to keep the following culturally responsive approaches in mind:
 - Support home language
 - Honor families' cultures
 - Identify and focus on family strengths
 - Create opportunities to form relationships and learn from families
- *Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Tip Sheets (Tip Sheets)* are resources for Head Start staff, family leaders, and refugee resettlement service providers to support content in the *Handbook*. The *Tip Sheets* correspond to the themes in the *Handbook* and include conversation starters, cultural considerations, and additional resources on the topic. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/center/refugee-families.html>
- To learn more about approaches to family engagement and parenting curricula for refugee families, please review *Parenting in a New Country: A Toolkit for Working with Newcomer Parents*. http://www.brycs.org/documents/raisingchildreninnewcountry_web.pdf



Head Start Performance Standards

45 CFR 1304.40 Family partnerships

- (d) Parent involvement — general. (1) In addition to involving parents in program policy-making and operations (see 45 CFR 1304.50), grantee and delegate agencies must provide parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents, both as individuals and as members of a group. Other community agencies should be encouraged to assist in the planning and implementation of such programs.
- (e) Parent involvement in child development and education. (3) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide opportunities for parents to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge, and understanding of the educational and developmental needs and activities of their children and to share concerns about their children with program staff (see 45 CFR 1304.21 for additional requirements related to parent involvement).

Acknowledgements

Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development was prepared under Grant No. 90HC0001 for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start (DHHS/ACF/OHS) by the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness and by Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS).



Raising Young Children User Guide Handout Instructions:

1. Design your own program-specific questions for each theme.
2. Divide staff into six groups and assign each group a question.
3. Ask each group to discuss the assigned question and to consider the following: their own opinions; differing opinions within their own family; and how a family in the program may respond.
4. Discuss implications for approaches to family engagement and ways to develop positive, reciprocal partnerships with families.
5. Share back with the whole group.
6. Follow up support can occur during reflective

Sample Questions

Culture Personal Reflections

Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Personal Reflections

Family Well-Being

What do you think about breastfeeding in public?

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Healthy Brain Development

What role should TV/iPads play in young children's lives?

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Safety and Protection

What does "reasonable risk" look like for toddlers?

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Early Learning and School Readiness

Should families encourage their 3-year-olds to eat without assistance?

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Guidance and Discipline

Should "time-outs" play a role in discipline?

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Connecting to Early Group Care

How long should infants/toddlers be in group care each day?

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Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development

Personal Reflections

(Design your own program-specific questions for each theme)

Family Well-Being

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Healthy Brain Development

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Safety and Protection

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Early Learning and School Readiness

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Guidance and Discipline

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Connecting to Early Care and Education

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Culture
Personal
Reflections

